

ANGUS COUNCIL - 2 NOVEMBER 2023

**ANGUS COUNCIL TRANSITION TO NET ZERO ACTION PLAN: 2022 TO 2030 ANNUAL
PROGRESS UPDATE 2022/23**

**REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, DIRECTOR OF VIBRANT COMMUNITIES & SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH**

ABSTRACT

This report provides the first annual update to Council on the implementation of the Transition to Net Zero Action Plan 2022 – 2030 and details the progress made on our emission reduction targets for the period 2022/23.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) notes the progress of the Transition to Net Zero Action Plan during 2022/23; and
- (ii) notes the progress of emissions reductions, future emissions reductions required and current challenges that are likely to impact on progress in meeting these.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

- 2.1 Delivery of projects and initiatives from the Action Plan will contribute to the following priorities in the Angus Council Plan 2023-2028.

Caring for our Place:

- Take action to mitigate against climate change by delivering our Transition to Net Zero Action Plan 2022 to 2030 and leading on the delivery of a Sustainable Energy Climate Action Plan (SECAP) for Angus to reduce area wide emissions.
- Reduce our energy use through a reduction in our property estate coupled with good management to reduce wasting energy.
- Delivery efficient waste services and encourage more recycling and cleaner streets.
- Enhance and restore Angus Biodiversity, corporately and with a range of stakeholders.

Angus Council is Efficient and Effective:

- Continue to develop our approach to agile working.
- Deliver our change programme.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Since the Council signed Scotland's Climate Change Declaration in 2007, Climate Change mitigation and adaptation has been an integral part of the Council's activities. In September 2022, Council approved its Transition to Net Action Plan (2022 to 2030) with the aim to ensure that the 2030 Scottish Government interim emissions reduction target of a 75% reduction in emissions, enroute to the Net Zero target by 2045, is met by the Council. As a result, the Action Plan identifies the key areas within the Council's operations that will be prioritised up to 2030, within available resources, to reduce its impact on Climate Change by transitioning to Net Zero by 2045.

3.2 The key themes identified below, will be used drive emission reductions within key operational areas to meet the 2030 interim emissions reduction target. Within each of these key themes, the Action Plan contains emission reduction projects and initiatives in each of the following areas:

- Leadership, Governance & Procurement
- Buildings, Energy & Infrastructure
- Waste, Recycling & Circular Economy
- Fleet & Business Travel
- Land Use Adaptation

4. CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The Transition to Net Zero Working Group has provided updates to each action, which are detailed in Appendix 1 to this report, alongside the progress made on each of the actions, projects, and initiatives. A RAG rating (red, amber, and green colour scheme) has been used to easily identify progress. Red identifies actions that have not been progressed yet; amber identifies that the action is in progress or is an ongoing action; and green shows the action is complete. Significant progress has been made during 2022/23 with several of the actions being implemented or completed.

4.2 The Council is making good progress towards the 2030 target of 75% reduction in emissions. From the base year of 2012/13 to the end of the financial year 2022/23, the Council reduced its emissions by 58%. Despite achieving a good reduction in emissions during 2022/23, the Council is still behind its ideal target position. Therefore, from now until the next interim target due in 2029/30 of a 75% reduction, the Council must reduce its emissions by 5.8% each year.

4.3 The Council's Planning and Sustainable Growth Service will continue to lead the delivery of the Transition to Net Zero Action Plan and support the Transition to Net Zero Working Group to deliver on the initiatives and projects with the Action Plan. The Transition to Net Zero Working Group will continue to meet quarterly to drive action and monitor progress.

4.4 The Transition to Net Zero Action Plan is a live document and will evolve as new techniques and practices develop, and as funding / budgets become available. A significant number of the actions have been completed or are underway; however, further discussions will shortly commence with the Transition to Net Zero Working Group to identify new initiatives and projects to add into the action plans to ensure we keep pace with the emissions reductions required.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial implications of the Action Plan are currently unknown, but work is being undertaken to quantify the costs of the initiatives and projects within the Action Plan. Grant funding, loans and Council funds will be required to enable Angus Council to successfully meet its emissions reduction target of 75% by 2030.

5.2 The Net Zero one off investment fund of £0.75 million for investment in climate change, net zero and biodiversity projects and initiatives was approved by Committee in May 2023. This is a substantial fund and further demonstrates the Council's commitment to climate and nature. , To meet the 2030 target, and beyond, this level of funding is required on an annual basis. There are various external funding streams and grants available, but they do not cover the full costs associated with achieving Net Zero. It is likely that many climate change, net zero and biodiversity projects and initiatives will have poor financial paybacks but high emission reductions and environmental gains; therefore, appropriate funding will need to be made available to allow these projects and initiatives to progress.

6. RISKS

- 6.1 Although good progress has been made, there is a risk the Council will not meet the 2030 legislative requirements. Failure to do so may result in Scottish Government repercussions and reputational loss as the Council is not mitigating its impact on climate change at the required rate. Falling behind now will likely affect the Council's ability to meet future legislative targets and ultimately Net Zero by 2045.
- 6.2 Energy and water consumption related emissions within Council buildings and operations are the biggest contributor to the Council's emissions and account for 73% of total emissions. Since they are the biggest contributor to emissions, they have the biggest impact to make. There are currently staffing and recruitment issues within Property Assets which are preventing large scale projects progressing and impacting on the Council's ability to achieve the rate of emissions reductions required to 2030.
- 6.3 The climate change risk is being reviewed in light of these challenges and will be reported to Scrutiny and Audit committee in January 2024 in the twice-yearly risk management update report.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The following Services were consulted during the progress update: Digital Enablement & IT, Environmental Services, Legal Governance & Change, Planning & Sustainable Growth, Roads & Transportation and Internal Audit

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is contained within Appendix 2 to this report.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Transition to Net Zero Action Plan Progress Update 2022/23.

Appendix 2: Transition to Net Zero Action Plan Progress Update 2022/23 Equality Impact Assessment.